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NATURE'S
Golden Wonders

NOBLE SEWARD ENDICOTT

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NATURE'S GOLDEN WONDERS

POEMS OF

NATURE, LIFE AND LOVE

BY

NOBLE SEWARD ENDICOTT

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DEDICATED

To those precious souls of yore,
who loved Nature as it really was,
and to those who live today who
enjoy the World's beauties as the
works of a true and living God.

PREFACE

I wrote these Poems that I might express my fond appreciation of true and lasting friendship, and the golden love which beautifies the soul and lifts mortals to heights of sublime happiness.

I am deeply interested in the wonders of Nature, which presents to us the beauties of the World. The nude expression of Nature appeals to me so strongly that I feel myself day by day drawn deeper into its boundless depths. All of its virtues and innocent reality, which God in his wisdom and for the wisest purpose has bestowed upon us. These wonderful beauties stand as a beacon light of God's unselfish love to blaze the pathway when we stray from the great road that leads to the highest enjoyment He has offered.

If these words be such as to soothe some aching heart, or cheer some forlorn soul, or dispel the gloom surrounding some poor unfortunate soul, who in desolation and despair has lost his way, I shall have been amply repaid. To drink deep of God's fountain of tender solicitude and compassion that is bubbling forth for each soul to drink. They will be refreshed. And doubly so when they bathe their hearts in the Sunshine. Every beam is a blessing, and will renew the vigor, create a strong desire to help our less fortunate Brother. God is great, His power is unlimited.

These Poems were not written with expectation of monetary gain, but are published at the earnest request of my friends and are simply my personal observation of the World's grandeur.

THE AUTHOR.

THE DREAM OF NATURE

Oh were I, in phantom form,
Wafted in nature's mildest storm,
I the groom, she my bride,
In drifting zephyr by my side;
Clasped in each other's arms,
Bask in magic of her charms,
And be one of the many few
Flowers come peeping through!

Could I watch through the night
When bleaching the lily white,
Cause the wind when it blows
In insert crimson in the rose,
Soar to fields far and new,
Tint the violet's delicate blue,
With uplifting cheer for the droll
By the fragrance of its soul!

Speak, sweet nature, dare I intrude,
While in your grandest mood,
Upon your wonders so richly rare?
When tinting the fruit growing bare,
Starting life anew over the land
With move of your delicate hand,
Brings flowers, sun-kiss the drops
Leaving trees, and shape the tops;

Then pass on in vapored mist
Sweetening places you have kissed,
And hover over the lily pond
Of which the world is so fond,
With radiant face, sweetest smile,
We then behold lily of the Nile;
Then view one with golden band
Blooming in beauty so grand

Sun's rays burst and zephyrs blew,
Madonnas and tiger lilies grew,
Over lands with slippered tread
Meadow lily peeped its dainty head;
Fleecy capped clouds rolling above
The very air filled with love;
Then heaven drew the fragrance up
When you scattered seeds of buttercup.

Birds colored blue, others were red
With topknots upon their head,
With plumes of the richest hue
Which dazzled me with the new;
You covered the acorn with a hull,
Calmed the ocean to a lull,
Until its waves purred in peace
More downy than the golden fleece.

Onward through the timbered dells
My magic bride in wonder dwells,
And holy angels in silence trip
Robed in fragrance of the tulip
Whose soul from wildness came
Made for itself the richest name;
The lily robed in checkered delight
Made its appearance during the night.

Hills and hollows which nature made,
Timbered lands and grassy glade,
Placid lakes lined by granite cliffs
For lovers in their drifting skiffs,
Scalloped edges, rapturous thrills,—
Gorgeously arrayed were daffodils,
In wild confusion and bursting through
Sun-kissed beauties sparkling with dew.

Winding rivers flowed, vines entwined,
Grapes were bulging with richest wine,
Passing on with a nod and a wink,
Out of which came the sweetest pink,
Spreading its leaves at early dawn
Bestowing its fragrance upon the lawn,
The wild clematis, most graceful queen,
In quiet grandeur could be seen.

On went nature by zephyrs drawn
With happy shout and easy yawn,
Along side of the winding stream
Swooning as if in rapturous dream;
Dropping plants of life for us here
So mildly pleasant and full o' cheer,
Scenting the clover blossoms as a part,
Strewing poppy seeds and bleeding heart.

Scattered smiles we should grant
With here and there a pitcher plant,
Soaring above the ocean's beaten sands
Where scenes were great and grand.
Waves rolled and leaped in glee
Washing the shells from the sea;
In which you heard the musical deep
Way the ocean spoke in silent sleep.

Chariot of wind with sun-kissed wheel
Drawn by steeds color of golden seal;
Along the river's grass-swept banks
Were performed some wonderful pranks,
Where willows drooped and wept in strings
For a thousand years and other things,
Away with many a romp and shout
Golden bellied cat, speckled the trout.

In lingering pause for all of those
Then brought forth the sweetest rose;
Which blushed its reddest with delight,
Made another yellow over night,
Before one could speak or think
Presented one color of the pink,
To tone up the wonderful sight,
Placed one between of spotless white.

Gliding down the slopes, not a pause;
Sounds of revelry in still applause;
Tinting the flowers, greening the sod,
Dropping bunches of the golden rod.
Dogwood fragrance was dripping down
And by the wind was scattered round;
Then you drenched with gentle rain
Sunflowers upon the rolling plain.

Lulling the four-o'clock to sleep
When morning-glories ceased to peep,
Placing the daisies in the shaded nook,
Put the ceaseless song in the brook;
The wine in grapes was a surprise
Rich as that in the sweetest eyes;
Never ending nature it does seem,
Forever of your grandeur I could dream.

THE SONG OF SILVER CREEK

The origin of this silver stream
Bubling forth like a crystal dream,
There nude Natures chiseled art
Kissed the Suns morning beam,
Then rippled down the mountain side
Laughed, chuckled, murmured, and shied
Among the Mountains' ragged, rugged cliffs
Where red warriors fought and died.

The art that Nature pictured there
Formed so rich, nude and rare
Of sculptured beauty in granite stone
With grandeur yet to spare,
Then onward with laughing silver tongue
Above where balanced boulders hung,
Grandest scene of nature's gorgeous gifts
With raptured beauty as it sung.

Down the mountain side it went
Murmering low with sweet content,
Over bright nuggets of unfound gold
The hidden wealth that nature sent,
Where human foot had never trod
Upon the granite rock, or sod
Great canons gaping chasm stood
As the works of a mighty God.

The song ceased with silent bliss
With leaping scream it couldn't miss,
Then with abject fear held its breath,
With a roar went over the precipice,
Hung a diamond curtain in blazing sun,
Fell a hundred feet, rose and run
With startled cry of wounded pain,
Laughed again, like it was fun.

Arising again like a fountain ghost
With voice of victory's mighty boast,
Queen of song in desolate wilderness
Rippled on toward the coast,
Then it sang again, purred and spoke,
Beneath the shadows of the giant oak,
Around the body of the mountain pine,
Where other beauties it awoke.

When giant nature hewed this chart
With reflections of the choicest art,
The looking glass of its crystal soul
Revealed secrets of its mirrored heart,
From warriors bold to lithest maid,
Quenched their thirst in cooling shade,
Partook of mountain brew richly sweet,
Which a mighty God had made.

Terror and fear of the Eagle's scream
Was tuned to music by this stream,
Song birds listened with deep concern,
Closing their eyes in a sweeter dream,
Musical voices so soft and low,
Like zephyrs of heaven always blow,
Lulled wild beasts into a peaceful rest
When dreams of paradise overflow.

In whirling whispers to confide
Into lakes which were deep and wide,
Where wild deer and the spotted fawn
Viewed photos of their golden hide,
Washing the breast of silver sand
In its cheerful journey over land,
Reflecting eyes soft as twinkling night
Was magic splendor mighty grand.

Where beauty romped in splendor dress,
Wild flowers of this wilderness,
With bursting beauty and petals spread
Shed their fragrance with eagerness,
Bled their souls into the breeze
Wafting to heaven above the trees,
Of this wonderful forest unexplored,
Which God made with apparent ease.

The sweetest picture reflected there
With velvet skin and darkened hair,
And with eyes like a midnight moon
Arts Venice form and ankles bare,
Woven beads on her moccasined feet
Deftly interwoven, so artful and neat,
By this Indian maiden of the wild
With nature blooming upon her cheek.

Where currents tossed and ripples broke,
Beauty slumbered nude, yet it spoke
Of the wonders hidden in its heart
Of which no poet ever wrote,
Although he may have wandered there
To view a scene so rich and fair,
Where mountain peaks like giants stood
And nature tripped with wilder air.

Marvelous wonder played hide and seek
From grass swept banks of silver creek,
To rippled depths of its crystal soul
Nature was viewed with plumaged cheek,
The Indian squaws quenched their thirst
From the bubbling springs which burst
Out of the mountains' granite sides,
So children of nature could be nursed.

God's given health and eternal bliss
Overflowing in a place like this,
Enticed the lone hunter to pitch a tent
Where rays of sun and zephyrs kiss,
With massive form and eyes of blue,
Physically perfect and six foot two,
Muscle like iron, with nerves of steel,
Fearless as a lion, yet kind and true.

No man lived more noble than he,
And with eye like an eagle could see
The sights on his gun the darkest night,
Felled his game from the highest tree;
His face was red, his heart was white,
He fought for what was right,
Upon this beautiful selected spot
The memory of him will be ever bright.

JUNE IN ITS HEIGHT

When bewitching June arrives,
Everything so fresh and alive,
That spires of fragrance raise
All Nature's sweetness in a maze
Of splendor; the Sun with its charms
Romping Nature to awaiting arms.
Dressed in magic of naked clothes;
You are overcome by a sleepy doze
And from work you feel immune
To lounge around in mellow June.

When bewitching June arrives
And desire to live reach the skies,
When you feel the finger prints
Of the flowers' different tints,
Perfumed breath tickle your soul;
When Sun's rays dance and roll
Down the road in silver plumes,
Burst and scatter beams in tunes,
Creates a desire to sing and dance,
When fragrant June is in a trance.

When delightful June arrives,
Coaxes the honey bee from its hive
To sip soul's richest essence from
Wild flowers in tune with his hum,
Soars away through the balmy air,
Dropping fragrance here and there,
Building spires of mellow might
To entrancing June in its height,
Makes your soul one massive bin
For gorgeous beauty to sink within.

We drink a delicious soothing julip
From the pallid beauty of the tulip.
Wafting winds gather violet perfume
Mixed with a tincture of heaven's June,
Wild roses pleading colored hue
Of unknown beauty enraptures you,
Your spirits soar to highest peaks
With soul of June painted on your cheeks,
And your heart overflows with cheer
To worship the sweetest month of the year.

THE WINTER DAYS

In the old winter days
The fires cheerful blaze,
Cracked, snapped, and sputtered,
Cast ghostly tinted light
In shadows of delight
Across the room as it muttered;
It wanted us to know
Of the coming snow,
It sang us almost to sleep
In golden guineyed time,
Which we hold sublime,
Memories of home we wish to keep.

The blaze shared our joys
By making a spooky noise,
Its color changed from red to blue;
Lo, an Angel stood by me
As I recall my memory,
With a presence so rich and true,
Spotless in her splendor
Just as God had sent her;
She cast her virtue about the room,
Touch of her phantom hand
Was heaven's honeyed land,
Dispelled my fears and scattered gloom.

Dry your tears and smile
For years and awhile,
For I am the Mother of your thoughts,
Not to cast a spell
But to forever dwell
And serve cool and refreshing draughts,
Drink deep, memories cheer,
While I am resting here,
When I depart I leave a golden urn
To baffle any witch
Of manhood pure and rich,
The future will cause you least concern.

That honest blaze, she said,
Burns a wreath around your head
And sputters the thoughts that roam around,
God's love will devour
The bitter with the sour,
And cleanse the brain and leave it sound;
With my hand she soared away
Through star-lit spray,
Into taunting night's somber shroud
To heaven's pleasant home,
Where Angels dwell and roam,
So far beyond the floating clouds.

ODE TO JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

There are monuments of marble and monuments of stone,
In memory of men's great deeds that posterity is proud to own;
There are monuments of words which reach to the skies,
Picturing this World in its laughs and its sighs.

James Whitcomb Riley wrote about everybody but himself,
The volumes of his words are seldom left on the shelf,
They leave a legacy of Indiana's loved Poet (plain Jim),
And what I am writing now is what I think of him.

He wrote of the World and the beauties it contained,
In words so clear and simple they easily explained
That he wished the right hand of fellowship to always extend
To all the World, showing them the love of a friend.

He wrote of the sunshine, and spoke of the rain,
And the cheerful disposition anyone could obtain,
Surround yourself with kindness and lend a helping hand
To all mankind, and your reward would be rich and grand.

He wrote the south wind and the Sun, inseparable, he said,
When they made the grain golden and spanked the pippins red,
He wrote about the women, and he wrote about the men,
And heaven's honeyed sweetness trickled from his pen.

He brought the Sun trotting down the country shaded road,
Then he wrote a cheerful poem about a dear little toad;
The farm, he said, was a palace where roses bloomed for all of us,
That the lark loved to sing, and that the jaybird had to fuss.

He wrote of the gentle rain, and that the thunder had to roll,
Then he said that love was the jewel of the soul;
He wrote of beautiful night and the pleading of the stars,
Of roses growing wild, eyes with the brightness of heaven's Mars.

He spoke of heavens, and the angels arrayed in lace,
The goodness of the Lord, the love for the human race;
In heaven there are goblets of richness, bubbling over the golden rim,
And rewards of merit waiting for Indiana's Loved Poet, Plain Jim.

WHEN WE PLOWED THE CORN

When we went out to plow the corn
In the early splendor of the morn,
And the blades were bathed in dew,
The Sun was peepin' through at you
From the tree tops' spangled cloak,
As the field lark cleared his throat
To sing his energetic and urging song,
Tellin' how lazy you had been all along;
It kind 'r made a feller mad, it did.
You threw a clod and he flew and hid.

When we went out to plow the corn,
Plowed away and listened for the horn,
An' sniffed delight from the pennyroyal,
Mingling its fragrance with the soil;
The smell of the fragrant sassafras tree
Made you hanker after its wholesome tea,
To thin your blood and make you limber
By drinking strength from such timber;
Greatest medicines in forest you find
Detriment to health are least inclined.

When we went out to plow the corn,
Hearts free and didn't care a darn;
Corn was green and its whiskers brown,
Just shootin' in an' out, hanging down,
Ears were plump and full of juice,
If you didn't eat 'em 'twas no excuse,
For the vermints did, an' smacked 'em up
Without the aid of spoon or cup;
When corn was green an' ear was full,
Invitin' like for you to give it a pull.

When we went out to plow the corn,
Standing waist high and uniform,
Could we be back there right now,
Harness the horses jes to show 'em how,
Sing our song on the way to work,
Adjust the hames with a familiar jerk,
Hitch the traces up as we used to do,
Muzzle the horses and take a chew,
Turn over the soil and sing with the morn,
Like we done when we plowed the corn.

PALACE OF THE WILDERNESS

Being weary of the toil and strife and sin and affliction
I sought solace in the wilds of the forest,
And within its silent depths, Lord, I drink deep magnificence of Thy works,
Admire the richness Thou hast bestowed upon Thine own image,
I quaff the refreshing draughts from the fountain of fragrance pouring unselfishly from the grandeur of the scene,
By which I behold the wonders of the world,
And breathe the rich perfume from the wild flowers bursting open in beauty.
From their souls comes forth the richness of heaven.
The dripping splendor from the sun, through the leaves of the trees,
Is falling in sanctified brilliance by its charming beauty.
Oh Lord, what wouldst Thou have me do to show my deep appreciation and love
Of this lavish display of power and wonders Thou hast unfolded in the form of nature?
In all of its simple beauty, devoid of any vanity, or sin.
I give my all that I am allowed to partake of this feast.
I hear the thrilling song Thou hast placed in the throat of the tiny birds,
And as I listen to their notes my soul is sweetened,
And the love of Thy goodness envelopes me,
And I am carried upward in whirlwinds of great joy created within this palace of Thy creation.
I behold the temple of truth in every shrub and tree from which I hear the applause of a thousand little hands in the leaves and behold the virtue in the flowers,
I feel the breath of heaven in the cooling breezes.
Oh Lord, that I could remain forever with this wonderful scene, be a part of it!
It would make me pure, fortify me with everlasting love.
Oh that the sinners of the world could gather here and be redeemed!
By bathing thmselves in the rich beauty of soothing tenderness of which the very air breathes your compassion.
I can feel the waves of delight wash my soul and break in silver sweetness around my heart,
And in my delight I am enraptured to await the next deluge.
Each one is more beautiful and makes me more pure;
I leave this wilderness of beauty with reluctance,
Feeling that I have been closely associated with the real wonders of Thy great love,
Which has enabled me to reach a conclusion of the most sublime joy with which a mortal could be blessed.

THE GENTLE WIND

Gentle wind, whence came you
With your lonely sigh?
Have you gathered in your journey
Some poor orphan's cry,
And now sigh your piteous wail
To seek the needed aid
For some poor soul in distress who
In want and sickness laid
Upon a bed racked with pain and
Needed a helping hand?
And you did not have time to tarry
In your hurry over land.

Gentle wind, where did you gather
The cool, fragrant kiss?
Did you steal it from the maiden who
Pressed her lips in bliss
Against her lover's, whence you sipped
The richness from its wine
To carry across the globe and press
Against these lips of mine?
That I might quaff the draught of
Sweetness tinctured in
By such a fragrant caress carried by
The earth's gentle wind.

Where did you gather the sobs you
Sing in listening ears?
Are they from the broken souls of
Mothers—precious dears—
Or might they be tattered remnants
Of just an idle dream.
Basking in the light of the sun's
Dancing little beam
Which mellowed up your breath which
You scatter over the earth?
And you keep us in good humor with
This good tempered mirth.

Gentle wind, you tarry not for time
Nor listen to our appeal.
But hurry on, gathering up the beauties
Over the valley and field,
Mingle them all together in one sweet
And continuous song;
Scatter them all here and there so
Generously as you sail along;
But I am sure you lingered over the
Fields of clover hay
For you leave me the fragrance as if
Upon the field it lay.

After the sun cured it so delicious
With beams of tender care
You pressed it to your loving breast
And dropped it everywhere;
Taking the breath of the old time pink
And tucked it away.
Then lingered around the tiger lily
So beautiful and so gay,
Absorbing a portion of its soul to
Scatter in your flight
You kissed and squandered it away to
Everything in sight.

You loved all things in your path
And caught them in your net
Along with the pallid tulip and the
Bursting violet;
The dark crimson rose opened its soul
And spread its leaves for you,
Plucking its honeyed heart laughingly,
Shook it along the dew.
Then tempted the world with this sweet
Blooming crimson rose,
And the people breathed its richness
In gentle wind that blows.

When you laughed, and sighed, and cried
And moaned in dire distress,
Among the valleys, along the streams
And through the water cress,
Entwined your arms around the mountain
Peaks, swept the valleys clear
Of all their gorgeous plumes and presented
Them to us here;
And we love you when you kiss us with
Your breath so sweet and shy
And greet you as a message that
God sent from the sky.

Then sail on, gentle wind, mellowed by the
Ways of the blessed sun;
You are the succor to the earth and to
Each and every living one,
For you bring the warmth from the heavens
And cast it all around,
And you have lots of friends on this
Earth when sailing down,
With your moans, your sighs and sobs of
Anguish, and of pain;
Yet in your breath we can foretell the
Coming of the rain.

THE SEASON'S SONG

After summer's soothing balm
Autumn's presence, sweetly calm,
Drops from Heaven to the ground
And tints the leaves gold and brown;
And they flutter from the stem
That greened and succored them
Upon the grass's cushioned bed
To dim the sound of the panthers' tread.

'Tis then we recall to mind
How the morning glory's creepin' vine,
Lined itself with bloomin' flower
Whose fragrance was a shower.
Even after the killing frosts
Its perfume was never lost,
For in our hearts its fragrance hung
And sang the song that summer sung.

When autumn comes and the russet scene
Clings to us like a happy dream,
Snow is falling in drifting flakes
Upon the ground like a spotless lake;
Gorgeous splendor of a summer's day
Comes to our mind in a happy way,
Calms our souls as winter sweeps along
In sweet remembrance of a summer's song.

The driving sleet on the window panes
Sings its song of hardened rain,
Succored the souls of flowers in bloom
When summer's in the air and the room;
In slippered beauty like a queen
If the flowers could be seen,
With fragrant wreath upon her head
Hummed the song that summer said.

Let us love the seasons as they come
Like we do music and the drum,
Listen to lullabys they always sing
From mid-winter to cheerful spring;
Unfolding beauties of different class,
From the heavens to the speckled bass;
Enjoy the greatness drippin' from the sky
To sweeten the Souls of you and I.

OH, TAKE ME BACK

When the dew was on the corn's
Ribboned blades,
An' the silken whiskers on the ears
Were amber shade,
An' the silken shiver of the blades
Could be seen
An' heard like a thousand mellow
Tambourines.

An' the golden-bellied punkins fit
For a pie
Winkin' at the red-coated pippin
Up so high,
With the jay bird fussin' an' the
Yaller hammer peckin'—
'Tis enough to take a feller back,
I reckon.

Yes, take him back, whar nature
Flowed in streams,
An' the feathers in the bed sweetened
Up his dreams.
And the roses climbed up the latticed
Portico
An' the fragrance of their souls jes'
Makes me want to go.

Back, where the cookies in the pantry
An' honey in the jar
Wounded the appetite and never left
A scar!
An' jes' think of the cider, better
Th'any sparklin' wine!
You could feel the crimson soul of the
Wiley sweets enwtined.

Aroun' you taste, an' my appetite right now
Dances a jig
When I think o' Rambo's and the limber
Twig.
Yés, take me back, where ribboned blades
On the corn
Tambourined with silken shiver the
Coming of the morn.

Where I can hear bob-white's whistle
Never hear a honk,
But at noon hear the toot of the
Appetising conk;
Jump astride old Dobbin, and follow
Up the sound.
Oh yes, me and old Dobbin, stable and
Kitchen-bound.

HOOKEY IN THE WOODS

The grammar class in school
Dreaded I and feared
Knew 'twas against the rule,
And I was rather scared.

To sneak away and wander wild
When woods were green and hoary;
Nothing there to beguile,
But nature's simple story.

I was sure wild nature knew
I loved its every little bit,
Confidingly sincere and true;
I was just a part of it.

I loved its crystal streams,
Waded their soft sandy bed,
Watched the sun's silver beams
Reflect shadows of my head.

In rippling waters freshly clear,
Singing its sweetest song.
And squirrels chattered near—
When they knew nothing wrong.

Ripe dew berries on the banks
Bursting with richness for me—
Could I nature ever thank,
For this delicious reality!

The mulberries hanging red
Beneath the cooling shade!
So the hookey boy could be fed,
And ease the hunger made.

The blue jays use to jaw and fuss
May apple's soul was in the air;
Seemed like they'd kinder cuss,
When they knew I was there.

A rose blooming under a giant oak
Was wilder than the scene
The joys of my soul it awoke,
Sweeter than a dream.

I use to kiss its blushing face
And drink its delicious perfume;
Its remembrance I can trace
In those days of June.

All the woodland joys forever be
When the sun cast its golden glow
Upon tops of beautiful trees
Where violets bloomed below.

Wild muscadines tan was complete
With a blush redder than wine—
So delicious and so sweet,
I never could define.

I knew where pecans were plump—
Undaunted by their dizzy height;
Every old snag and rotten stump,
And the darkest places after night.

For the black haw's honeyed heart
I had my compass set,
And so selfish of my part,
I'm sure the possums hate me yet.

And when Jack Frost cut the stems
The hickory nuts tumbled down;
In delight I gathered them,
Ate the goodies roaming around.

I eat acorns when sweet and best,
Devoured persimmon's yaller soul;
When full I laid down to rest
And watched the rooting mole.

There were the wild honey bees
Who garnered up the sweet,
Stored it in the hollow trees,
Sealed against winter's sleet.

The scream of my youthful voice,
I hear its echo in the wilds;
I sought its grandeur by choice,
And I am once more a child.

Pants rolled up to my little knees
And my shirt open in front—
Yes, I'm wilder than the bees
And once more on the hunt.

For sacred spots and cooling shades
In shadows golden flowers cast;
I've left finance and the trades,
And back once more at last.

In retreats where intruders never went—
To love its somber silence still—
I seek its solace with intent;
Forget it, I never will.

Where I loved silence's sweet caress;
And I doze in a peaceful dream—
Visions of a girl in gingham dress
As an angel it would seem.

The song of the forest in its height
Soothes my soul to everlasting rest
And I see familiar faces in the light
Of the sun's golden west.

COWS IN THE CLOVER

When the cows were in the pasture
An' milkin' time was near
And the barking of Shep rang out,
Quite distinct and clear,
They heard the warning bark and
Shook their heads in fun,
Bellowed several times and then
Made the homeward run.

When the cows were in the pasture
An' the clover was bloomin' red—
Flavor and richness was jes
Drippin' from every scarlet head—
An' the cows were slick and fat
(In facts coudn't be beat),
Livin' off this ocean of fragrance
They loved so much to eat.

When the cows were in the clover and
Corn formin' on the stalk,
Golden grain was ripe, an' the turkey
Gobler struttin' in the walk,
An' the reaper was a cuttin' and
Bob White whistled his tune—
An' the world was mellow and sweet in
Never beaten June.

When the reaper was music, and the table
Set on the lawn,
An' the odor from it like the dew
At the break o' dawn.
An' the love of life was foremost
In every livin' thing,
The sweetness of the earth it seemed
Was movin' on the wing.

Could any livin' mortal wish for
Anything better than this?
After livin' for years in a great
City minus such a bliss,
As when the reaper was a-cuttin' and
Bob White whistled his tune
An' the dinner mother baked was a-waitin'
In never beaten June.

ONE DAY IN JUNE

One day when June
Was in a swoon,
And mellow fragrance blew
Beauty and the sighs
Of its paradise,
Just as though it knew
I was drinking deep
Myself to sleep,—
On a couch of zephyrs mild,
An' yet I was hid
By fragrant coverlid,
Sleeping peaceful as a child.

Below and underneath
An oaken wreath,—
Sinewed limbs across
The edge of shade
Which they made,—
Dripped the aging moss;
Soul zephyred winds
Had the sweetness in
As only God could combine
Rivulets of runnin air
So pure and fair,
Trickled with the wine.

I have seen the day die
In a goden gloried mist
Waving a fond good-bye
To beauties it had kissed.

Oh, that mortals might own
As rich and sweet a tone
As the forest in its might.

MAIDEN SPRING

I love the queenly maiden spring,
Dressed in raiment fine,
Of rapturous beauty waltzing down
The aisle of time,
In harmonious glory keeping step
With musical thrills,
Sweeping aside with laughter the
Earthly and human ills,
Bursting forth in a maze of beautiful
Pleasing green
Enveloping the woorld in a summer—
Thoughtful dream.

Over the mountains and down the
Winding slopes,
Building the fundation of our
Summer's certain hopes,
That brings the flowers along
To brighten up our life
And drive away the weary winter
Of toil and strife,
By unfolding the beauties of the
Earth's blooming paradise
Which encircles the world and
Reaches to the skies.

The rivulets of richness running
Tinctured up the air,
No doubt are pleasig to him who
Looks from up there,
Upon us poor sinners residing on the
Earth below.
Drink from the fountains of fragrance
When they overflow,
And spray us with a deluge of such
Rich perfume
That we are enraptured, so we sink
Into a summer swoon.

IN NATURE'S SWEET RETREAT

When the smile was in the air,
Any place you looked—it was there;
And the face with the sunny look
Was in the clouds and the brook,
Which smiled the words of cheer
For all the souls living here.

And in the forest's silent depth
Smiles awoke that had slept
Within their couch of silent retreat,
Where dreams were choice and sweet,
Undisturbed by your cushioned tread
Upon the leaves the trees had shed.

Those leaves alive shook with glee
When they slyly smiled with me;
Through the sweetness dropping down;
Removed my care and erased by frown,—
Replaced by smile upon my face,
Resembling the sweetness of the place.

I heard the cooing of the turtle dove
'Twas but a message smile for her I love,
Just like the dogwood blossoms wore;
And the honey locust's pods to the core
Were loaded rich with yellow meat;
Nature dared a living soul to beat.

'Twas a palace nature made for us.—
Erase the frown to remove the fuss,—
Cease the noise and ease the mind
From ceaseless toil that had entwined
Around your existence and made you blue;
Silent grandeur had removed it for you.

THE MORNING SPLENDOR

When the sun raised, this world was ablaze
With light that makes us all live;
The great vegetable kings and other things
Their vigor and strength freely give;
The spangled splendor so rich and tender
Forms into a brilliant scene
Flooded with light dancing and bright
Developed into jeweled dream.

The ridered steeds of glittering deeds
Came charging down the way,
Throwing charming spangles in mellow angles
And strewed the melting spray,
Dried the dew that wept from where it slept
And moistened the cooling winds,
Kissed scalloped leaves of drooping trees
Falling upon this world of sin.

Tucking over and under in startling wonder
Beams of different hues and size—
And the way it shone from its blazing home
Made the world a golden paradise!
The rainbowed stems of glittering gems
Were studdend with the fires
Enameled of different hue of gold and blue
And tinted with beautiful desires.

They tumbled in and out around and about,
Charmed the wind soft and low,
Sang the mellow feast of brilliant east
Of the jewelled splendor's glow,
The immortal tune of a sun in June
Rich with living desires
Upon the strings of many silent things,
The music that never tires.

Upon the window panes and down the lanes
Lit upon the cock's crimson comb,
Through timber and glade, upon the fodder blade,—
Drove the honey-bee from his home,—
Warmed up the wind and put the feel in
The horses' hungry impatient neigh—
Everything you meet wants to work an' eat
And all their desires to obey.

IN THE WIND'S MOANS

I heard the wind
In bitterness
Blow the breath
It gathered in
Silent depths of
The wilderness
Against this world
Of sin.

Then again with
Might and main
It blew in
Fitful gusts
The anguish and
Picked up in
Wrecks of lust

Which dot this
World of vice.
Sprinkling innocence
Of golden sprays
Where strong drink
Is prone to entice
Memories of virtue's
Youthful days.

When the night was
Clear and still—
Flute in the wind
Of a whippoorwill—
And mingled through
The cricket's song
Croak of frogs as
It went along.

Dismal howls of
Dog most forlorn
In the night, which
Was his morn,
Were heard in the
Wind's spooky sigh
While apparitions
Of spirits passed by.

Then the wind sang
Of golden ease,
Fragrant clover and
Humming bees,
Resurrected beauties
Lying beneath the sod
Were looking at me
From the throne of God.

THE GHOST WITHIN

The golden wreath
That lies beneath,
Heavens of wonders be;
Life will never unfold
Nor will eyes behold
This wonderful mystery;
Its brilliant light
Will remain in sight,
Visible to you and I;
Breath of flame
Will be the same,
And we wonder why.

Burning so true
No wind ever blew
Could put it out.
Misfortunes, clouds
Or deathly shrouds,
Adverse tempests about;—
Within the breast
The angels blessed,
Lit the mellow flame,
Tripped on slippered feet
Perchance to greet
Bud of life, a name.

Well, nature understands
Her secret plans;
To build human breath,
Tint the features
Of beautiful creatures
With crimson plumes to death;
Heart's bloom, the rose
Which overflows,
Scarlet hues in cheeks
Greatest artist born
Could not adorn;
Blush as mild and meek.

Wherein beauty lies
Of breathing paradise,
Ghostly breath rocked to life,
Voice whispering sweet
Of rarest treat,
Soul-passioned wife;
Perchance listen wise
Of mothers' sighs,
Desires that sweep o'er
Heavens of passion soar.

Vast endless space
Of the human race,
Beyond breathless mist,
Behind drooping lids
Where love's pyramids
Of passion cannot resist,
The pinnacled spires
Of eating desires,
Nature's wondered sphere
Reaches unknown heights
In darkest nights,
Eye can't see, ear can't hear.

Breathing the song
That brings along
Life in vain protest,
Viewing sightless wonders
Amid trembling blunders,
Toiling on without a rest;
Of most devouring age
In conscious rage,
Fates so noiseless, so queer,
As tides rise and overflow—
The Lord only knows
Depth of presence here.

I drink a toast
To the unseen ghost,
Walking within my breast
The hidden vapored trail
Science searched to no avail;
Until phantoms rest
Rocked in the deep
Of sweetest sleep,
Dreams mild as dew
The choicest fruits
Of desires, pursuits,
Served to chosen few.

From the faintest gasp
Mortal life you clasp,
With determination grim
Desire to stumble on
Before breath is gone,
Star of hope from him,
Imbedded within the soul
Around heart's crimson bowl,
My breath of vapored mist
Ghost within abides
And securely hides,
Grinds fate's daily grist.

Life in brilliant dawn
By vapored breath drawn,
Breath's flower in bloom,
Life of infant spring,
Most innocent precious thing,
Of nature's sacred womb,—
Nursed in mystic spell
Of heart's bubbling well,
Veiled for coming events
Be thou gladder
Miss stings of the adder,
Or deceit in gypsy tents.

Thou wilt be blessed
To reach the crest,
Linger there in bliss
In your youthful prime,
Wave your banner at time,
Of misfortune you miss,
Then listen for chains
To rattle in brains,
Of skeletons roaming inside;
'Twill be the aftermath
Wandering from the path,
Which did with you abide.

You will hear screams
In your troubled dreams,
Tiger claws will tear
Locks in crimson stain,
In mortal anguish pain,
Leave you in despair;
When ghosts in black
Will walk you back,
Over roads traveled in haste
You shiver in grief
When seeking relief,
Of bitter dregs to taste.

Mortal, envy the flowers
Drenched by gentle showers,
Pure with natural tint;
Heed conscience, hint,
Before shedding tears
Of mortal fears,
Then come good deeds
In robes of needs,
With crown upon the head,
Glad tidings' tinkling bell
Will wish you well;
Bury skeletons of the dead.

THE FOREST IN THE SPREADS

I used to love to seek the quiet of the woods
When nature had on its shawl and hood
Dressed up for you to love and admire;
Clothes selected by the one who is higher
In efficiency and architectural designs,
Painted for humanity to erase from the minds
This ceaseless struggle of unrelenting toil,
Enrich the heart and unwind the coil.

Standing there in its majestic prime,
Innocent as a lamb and free from crime,
Waving to you the banner of sacred trust
Of an honest Judge, and Jury just—
To give each human his honest dues,
Edit the verdict and print the news,
With the greatest press of all creation
Ablest editor and largest circulation.

Tread upon this carpet with green velvet tinge—
Beautiful design with tassels on the fringe,
Scollops on the leaves cut with nature's shears,
Fanned with perfumed essence of the atmosphere—
It worshipped with you, pronounced its text,
Kneeled down and betrayed its sex;
Feigned to scorn and deigned to tease
When its skirts were blown to the breeze.

Alone in the wilds of wooded regions
Surrounded by timbers' noted legions
Who for hundreds of years had laughed at time
Wonderfully innocent and most sublime;
Time had been generous to these oaken kings
As it generally is to massive things;
Unfolding their leaves to a morning sun
Delighted at the day that had just begun.

The dullest person could plainly see
That giant nature was on a spree;
My hat blew off as silence swept
Through unpaved lanes of stillness kept,
Filled my heart with abject fear,
Enveloping me with its innocence dear;
Filled my nostrils with wooded essence,
Wrapping around me its majestic presence.

Placed upon my shoulders its timbered cloak
And around my throat a fragrant yoke,
Shook heaven's dew from the leaves,
Dampened my fears to retrieve;
The rays of the sun danced where heaven swept
Awakening the dew from where it slept,
After falling from its starry dome
It wept to leave its twinkling home.

How I feel memory's sweeping tide
As it nestles closely to confide.
In those surging billows of delightful June
When nature's orchestra played its sweetest tune—
The cornet note of birds amid the silent hum,
In perfect time with the woodpecker's drum,
Which missed a beat now and then
Disturbed by the changing notes of the wren.

The squirrel's breastworks of scaly bark
Behind which he chattered with the lark,
The missing sap suckers beat, here and there,
Were only the rests in the air.
Redbird strutted in his crimson uniform,
Plumes in his topknot fluttered with the morn,
Bluebird's dress of military troops
Inspired their hurrahs and patriotic whoops.

The sun's rays of bursting splendor
Kissed daisy-heads, young and tender;
Nestled with the violets of heaven's blue,
Made sparkling gems out of the dew;
I felt God's hand with velvet touch—
This reassured me it was such
Presence as binds the golden strands
From earth to the chosen lands.

Years have passed and years have flown
Since I was in that forest all alone;
I feel crimson surf's lashing tide
Dashing its waves against my side,
Break and scatter its scarlet spray
Upon those sweet memories so far away;
And when I ride those billow-swells
I hear memory's buoys ring their bells.

WHEN GOBLINS WALK

Mid the spectered gloom that's in the room
When the lights are burning dim
Thoughtful goblins appear of former dears—
You recognize either her or him—
Thru mingled chaff read the epitaph
Of those precious souls of yore,
By memory's handicraft hear sighs and laughs
On the banks of the golden shore.

Our thoughts outweigh the gold that lies
In vaults of selfish banks,
In falling cascades where mist is sprayed
We stand in enchanted ranks;
In gilded gauze of memoried applause
Hear little hands clapped in glee,
Gathered one and all in brain's festive hall
To hold their golden jubilee.

Phantom thoughts are dressed in their best
And gathered for the feast
That will be spread for the living and the dead
From the west and the east;
From barren plains and apparition lanes
And the bursting flowered south
Where magnolia trees and southern breeze
Bloom in spite of drouth.

Banquet tables set, minus all regret,
By mellowed age of the past
Spiteful get-even's died a-grievin';
Good fellowship reigns at last.
The spotless souls in burnished gold
Have swept the vengeance halls;
Then nothing remains of bygone stains
Peace be with us all.

The angels of peace all draped in fleece
Circle around the bloodied throne
And down the veins of tingling lanes
Led by a peaceful chaperone;
The banner of passive skies to emphasize,
The glory that few have shared;
The friends and kin are all ushered in
Meet upon the level and the square.

MOTHER, FERD AN' CALICO

Wall, I reckin' I jes as well tell yu—me an' mother driv tu town
An' since I've been born, I never seed such cavortin' aroun'.
Thar wuz flags an' banners hangin' here an' enny place,
An' every person I looked at had a smile on their face.

I wundered what all the fuss waz or cud be about,
'Caus the way they'd squandered money peered awful stout,
An' I spoke to ma 'bout it, jes as we druv along—
She an' I cum to the conclushun it wuz a terrible wrong.

Don't 'spose we wud av ever knew, but bless my everlastin' hide,
If we didn't run intu an' ole frend of ours, Larry McBride,
An' he tole us that this-ere ole town had on its best
To greet all her solgers frum France an' he with the rest.

An' that put me to thinkin'—me an' mother—fur our boy Ferd
Had jined the army, an' frum him we had never even herd
Since; peered an' seemed to us, he jined an' then wuz sent
Away tu Franc with sum Kansas or sum Mizzouri regiment.

"By golly," I sed to ma, "wudent it be a strange howdy-do
If Ferd wuz on this-ere train and we cud see him cum thru!"
But by this time the crowd had us in kinder uv a gruve
An' closed aroun' us in a way—darned if we cud move.

I sed to ma, there's joy here today, an' flags and buntin' rare,
An' thar's smiles in the heart an' smiles in the air;
Everybody is so happy I do believe they are in a joyful trance;
Fur Larry sed this wuz the day all the boys cum back from France.

Then I seed sum gals with an' arm full o' flowers
Jes strewin' 'em aroun' the wagons, an' sum fell in ours.
Ma sed, "John, get me one o' those sweet little pinks!"
An' sum sweet gal thru a handful at us before we cud think.

We only had time to get kinder squared an' I sed to ma
"Nancy, this-ere crowd beats anything I ever saw;
An' my off mare "Calico" peered too awful skittish an' shy.
"If that-ere brass band cums along sumthing sure is goin' to fly."

Then I herd tramp-tramp-tramp—gosh, 'twas music of their feet
An' the Mizzouri boys cum marchin' down that flower-strewn street.
"Hurrah!!" I sed, "if our boys aint bak to fill the vacant place!"
An' by jing, there wuz a smile on mother's happy face.

"By George," a feller sed tu me, "this-ere town has dun herself proud
When she got together today this-ere grat an' mighty crowd."
Everyone I cud se wuz smiling an' it wuz a happy stream o' joy,
A never-to-be-forgotten day, an' mother wuz to meet her boy.

Then the band struk up Yankeedoodle an' I declar
It wuz everything I cud do to hold that ar off mare.
An' I felt a thrill tinglin' thru me, clean to my toes,
An' I sed to ma, "yu can't blame a boy when he enlists an' goes."

"Here they cum, hurrah-hurrah! the Mizzouri troops have returned!"
An' we greet them today fur the glory that they 'av earned,
In that-ere shell-ripped land frum fur across the seas
An' we are showin' our luve by the flags that kiss the breeze.

Then I herd a command "hep-hep"; that-ar off mare pawed the ground;
She nickered and neighed that she had recognized its sound.
The voice of her old pal, and her frend, our own boy Ferd;
I wuz so dumb-founded, I cudent say a single word.

But ma she leaped out o' that wagon like when in her charms
An' had that-ar boy of hers clapsed in her luvin' arms.
Both o' them cried for joy until the tears run off their noses,
An' them-ar flower gals just lit-rally kivered 'em up with roses.

An' them-ar solger chums o' his, they had leakin' of the eyes;
Seemed like the Lord was rainin' the happiness frum the skies;
An' that-ar mare kept pawin' an' nickerin' an' there wuz nothin' else to do
After lovin' mother, Ferd had to go and love her, too.

Then we looked at the other relatives meetin' their loved ones
It wuz a case of mother-father-brothers-and-sisters-and-sons,
All mingled together in one great family golden jubilee,
An' everybody in this-ere ole town wuz jes as happy as cud be.

'Twas sweet to see the happy faces that the mothers kissed,
But I wept with other mothers lookin' for boys they missed;
Many a brave and true mother had cum down to play a mother's part
With a smile upon her face, but with pain in her heart.

It wuz the city's greatest day without a single doubt
An' all the joy an' sweetness it had it jes poured it out;
An' the flowers leaked the fragrance that all citizens had,
An' they held sweet communion with brother, sis, mother and dad.

But that-ar mare wuz jes as happy as anyone I cud see,
An' she jes whinnied an' neighed when she looked at mother, Ferd and me.
She wuz a dappled gray, sum spots dark, sum like the snow,
An' her color wuz so much like a dress Ferd called her Calico.

Strange how effecshun runs in animals for those that's kind,
An' this wuz a demonstration of the ties that surely bind;
For when she wuz a colt an' tore her breast on the picket fence
Ferd doctored her back to health and she's ben crazy about him ever since.

WHERE I LOVE TO WANDER

I love the woods when they are hoary
And a palace of silence in their glory;
Amid somber grandness of sweetness made
With soothing soul and cooling shade
Of nature robed in magic splendor
It's arms clasped around gentle and tender
Lull you to sleep when heaven brings
The breath of the wind's low murmurings.

Solace in a scene so sweet as this—
Something I wouldn't care to miss—
Causes me to hie away from busy throng
And bathe myself in the charming song
Of mocking birds' thrilling notes,
Red birds cheerin' the wind afloat—
The sigh of the forest soothing tone—
Could I remain forever with this alone?

The wine from the blushing muscadine,
With dogwood blossoms rich and fine,
Wild violets peeping through the grass
Which I gathered for the sweetest lass,
Walking with me through these chosen lanes
And halls of sun with latticed panes,
Fell on carpeted ground, blue-grass made,
Nature's pattern and design of highest grade.

We heard the zephyr's tide of billows sigh
When delights of love-vision passed us by;
Applause of the leaves was low and mild
When fragrance from flowers growing wild
Were smiling to the heavens most divine
Like a beautiful prayer of summer time,
The gift of God for mortals here below
To love and enjoy its beauties before they go.

UNCLE RILEY AND AUNT MATILDA NOBLE

Two of the most pleasant souls that lived a charming life
Where Uncle Riley Noble and Matilda, his good and honest wife.
The brightest stars of their lives was Christian fortitude
During their earthly existence at a place named Solitude,
In ole Injiana among the beech hills that kissed the eastern breeze
In sweet communion with their lives of Christian ease.

Blue grass swept the gentle slopes like great green sea,
Surrounded the house by roses of fragrant ecstasy;
The honeysuckles climbed the white walls and opened their dreamy heads
An the morning-glories dipped in dew above the tulip beds;
Cast their splendored and enriching orbs in fragrant paradise
In keeping with the two sweet souls that lived their Christian lives.

The woodbine climbed around the lattice-door on the porch's eastern side
And drank the rays of the morning sun for their splendor bride—
Jes seemed as the beasts were good as they could be
And there wasn't any difference in anything that I could see;
I didn't know it then, but I can fully comprehend
The great yield of the crops must have been a god-send.

With the crib full o' corn and the loft plum-full of hay
The horses neighed in mirth and the chickens were fat and gay;
With the cellar full of everything good to drink and eat—
The cider was sparkling and the bins were full o' wiley sweets—
Hickory nuts were in the sacks and the popcorn tied to a string
That stirred up jack as it popped the highland fling.

The cookies in the pantry were in a brown tin box
With the honey on the shelf and the milk in the crocks;
The light bread was in a box by itself so good and brown—
Tickled the palate with such ease and mowed the hunger down—
An' when you spread the honey drippin' out o' the comb
Upon the buttered bread 'twas a livin' paradise at home.

Uncle Riley had a place for everything; it had to be jes so!
A better kept place on earth I wouldn't care to go.
The lap robes were folded up and the harness on a certain peg,
Axle grease on the jiste and the curry comb an' brush in a keg;
He was just as careful with the horses and especially his buggy nag—
An' the collar when took off had to be wiped off with a rag.

But he was so good an' kind, besides so cheerful and so jolly,
To have opposed him in any order was the rankest kind o' folly.
Now Aunt Matilda was pretty near—or I should jedge the same—
In fact they were both as noble as Noble was their name.
Seemed as tho God had picked 'em out an' people rather guessed
He not only crowned them Christians, but checked 'em among the blest.

But endless time had its way as it usually does with all
And Uncle Riley and Aunt Matilda answered time's taunting call.
Both passing away after a life of tender paradise they had won
And both are buried beneath the cedars in quiet Rising Sun.
There's a monument higher than the one o'er their graves—
It reaches to the skies and upon it the Christian banner waves.

My trembling pen is thrilled by the sweetest thoughts to be
Of the times they held me in their arms an' upon their knee,
Whn sick, made to my little bed many tender an' anxious trips,
Cooled my burning brow and moistened my fevered lips;
The spires of thought in my heart are drenched in crimson red
And the angels of memory are hovering over the graves of the dead.

I know that the children who were then jes my size
Think of those dear souls and then look to the skies
To see if they cannot see their smile or hear the gentle voice
Calling from the clouds to send them kisses of old time choice.
They all remember them, jes like they were on the farm at home,
An' no doubt they fare equally well in the golden dome.

SWEETHEARTS IN THE SPREADS

When I wus a boy in the Spreads and hadn't much to do
Luck seemed agin me and friends were very few;
But I remember one who stuck thru thick and thin—
Haven't seen her for a long time and I wus jes wonderin'
If she ever thinks of me, now, like I do of her.
Where she lives at present, and if it's very fur.

For she had been left an orphan from a very little miss
An' never knew a mother's love or the even run of bliss.
She done all the housework, which seemed but simple play,
An' I used to help her wash the dishes and put them all away.
I always counted on her and really was dependin',
When my pants were tore and needed a little mendin'.

They were all poor like me and we all felt about the same;
Her father wus always out and she was glad when I came.
We were kinder affectionate-like, us two so pore an' so sad—
Her without a mother, an' I had neither mother or dad;
An' it could be seen both needed some one to console,
When Fate stepped in and played its usual role.

There was nothin' in the parlor but a bureau and a bed—
"The place has never looked the same since mother died," she said.
"Poor brother has been awful sad and father's never been the same;
God don't seem to like us, it appears, an' I guess we all are to blame:
For we have not worshipped Him like we did when she was here;
Father has been so careless and brother don't seem to care."

"An' do you know, Nobe, that you have been my only friend.
I don't know for certain, but I kinder comprehend
That dad hasn't any use for you and I am afraid
That the plans will go awry that you and I have laid.
To marry some day, and then your pants won't be tore;
We will both have better clothes, and more to eat, an' not be so pore."

We always watched for her father who had very little to say
An' this is the reason that when he would come I was always gone
away;
But one day when we had prayed to God an' both cried together
We fell asleep unmindful of her father, or the weather
That outside prevented him from working, brought him home unex-
pected,
And his step upon the porch awoke us and our fears resurrected.

He ordered me out of the house and told me not to come again;
In spite of all our pleading which seemed to be in vain;
But right there this dear girl showed herself a queen to be proud
When she told him to get his dinner and supper she allowed
That the matter must be settled now and for all time at least,
For me to come and go when I pleased and the ban on me released.

Or if he didn't we would both of us jes pack up and go
Some place where sweetness was plentiful an' anger ceased to flow;
Her father's face was sullen and he was rather inclined to pout,
But she told him what was what, and made it awful stout.
"Well, Nobe, you and her can, I guess, but it ain't hardly fair."
But then we all made up again and things were on the square.

I well recall those eyes of hers so dark and so deep,
An' when I looked into them it made my heart jump and leap;
Soft and spleading like, and black and as mild as the dew—
Seemed as if the stars of her soul was shining in them for you;
An' besides, there appeared in them something so romancin'
An' the gods of love were jes a-singin' an' a-dancin'.

Tonight I was jes a-wonderin', (we are both fifty-one today)
Time has no doubt mellowed us with age since I went away;
But do you know I have a-hankerin' to look into her eyes, and press
That dark-eyed beauty, form enclosed in that gingham dress,
To my heart, jes before death steps in an' takes his toll,
An' see again the banners of love that wus flying in her soul.

Oh, phantom memory, sail around the globe, search the hidden trail,
Flash the news to the stars, tell them of this sweet little tale,
That I weave the fabric so fine of a pair of dark dewey eyes
Raching from my heart to the heavens of her skies,
And bask in the blushes that swept across her features so sad and
and sweet;
I quaff draughts of memory tonight when of her I speak.

I am sure that God has not forgotten to reserve her a place—
Such a blessed little soul with such an angel face—
Her and I without a mother, neither had we aunts—
She with only a gingham dress, and me with only a pair of pants.
But our hearts beat together, kept time with our love,
An' if I don't meet her again on earth I hope I do it above.

THE CALL O' THE FARM

I heard something calling; 'twas the dear ole farm
That kept a-soundin' and a-soundin' its alarm;
Heard the dinner bell a-restin' high on the post;
Loved its tone so well, but its meanin' the most.

Because I knew Mother had the dinner done
An' the ringin' o' the bell to notify her son
To unhitch and bring the tired team in to eat,
Which to me and the hosses was our greatest treat.

Oh, well, I'm in the city now an' wonder when
I will hear the bawl o' the calf an' cackle o' the hen;
An' the bleat o' the sheep and the grunt o' the hog
With the crow of the rooster an' bark o' the dog.

The smell o' the clover an' the scent o' the rose
With the apple blossoms in the wind that blows,
Back on the farm that now seems sweet to me,
Where everything was natural—as natural could be.

The waves on the wheat an' the smell o' the hay
Take me back thru the years and to the day
When the air was pure and the eatin' was rich and good;
If you didn't eat all you wanted, they wished you would!

The pumpkin pie was fine in the days of old,
'Twas good when it was hot, but better cold;
The sweet milk was stored in the spring house crocks;
Wide open for any livin' soul, minus any locks!

'Tis no wonder a city feller hates the noise
When he thinks o' home and the farm and avoirdupois
That he carried aroun', sound as a dollar an' full of vim;
Always in the pink of condition and never slim.

Just the freedom that was always restin' there;
Anything you found in stock was your earnest share;
Everything was livin', Mother was well an' sisters, too;
I long to eat and live jes' like I used to do.

And get away from the smoke and the ceaseless grind,
Get back on the farm, rest my bones, ease my mind;
Walk down the rows of corn and wade thru the grain,
Get up in the apple tree and view the sweeping plain.

And the windin' streams and the towerin' hills beyond;
Forsake the city, leave the toil and then be fond
Of the scenes again, where I toddled when a little child;
Where everything was free, and the woods were wild.

Where the richness arisin' from the fields of clover
Was floodin' the winds and jes' bilin' over;
Cows were fat and their hair was like softest silk,
And the Lord only knows, was there ever such milk!

I wan' to go back to where I was born
An' drink the beauties of the fragrant morn;
I've longed for the ole home since I've been grown,
And I love all the stock we used to own.

THE STAR OF VIRTUE

Her lips with delicate might
Made mine crazy with delight,
Quaffing from her handsome eyes
Soothing draughts of paradise.

I beheld the star-splendor burned,
Brilliant passion love had earned;
Leaping flames of love, fiery red,
Developed love's crown on her head.

With fawning eyes and deep concern
She handed me passion's golden urn;
Full of lilies of her soul so white,
Sparkling with gems of virtue bright.

The gods of passion dreamed in peace
Soft and sweet as the golden fleece;
Treasures of her beautiful soul I beheld
Where the angels of virtue dwelled.

ODE TO DEPARTED WIFE

Yes, I weave the fabric fine
Of eyes that searched my soul,
Creating therein love's summer time,
When winter was bleak and droll.

And I shall never, never forget,
Though many years have past;
Love in her eyes lingers yet,
Reflections in my heart she cast.

The throb of our hearts entwine
And her magic form nestles near;
Her eyes are looking out of mine,
She is with me everywhere.

Admires with me the blooming flower
When woods are in their glory;
Boughs dripping fragrance as a shower
Tell summer time's little story.

When red rose's bursting splendor
And its scarlet petals spread.
I feel the look, soft and tender,
Of her spirit, though flesh is dead.

I beheld violets blooming blue,
Plucked them for her as I should,
Because they bloomed purest virtue;
In her soul as a lily would.

We strolled across valleys green
And the daisies bowed their head;
Tomb-stones of her home were seen,
Surrounded by the dead.

Walking onward beneath the night
When the moon in golden blaze
Cast its glow with silent might
For the spirits of midnight days.

Standing where she was laid to rest,
The spirits arose in their might
And in shrouds of death were drest,
During the mid-hours of the night.

"They are only phantom pals of mine,"
She said, "To bathe in lonely sighs
Of the wind crying among the pine,
Where the spirit never dies."

Then gathered spirits in wild delight
That lit up the somber gloom,
A jubilee in mid-hours of night,
Around her spotless tomb.

Then flutter of strange wings—
"'Tis the Angels," she said.
"Listen to the silent murmurings
When they speak to the dead."

Then the angels called the roll,
Hers was the first on the list.
I heard the solemn bells toll
Upon the phantom unseen mist.

The sound rolled down the hill
And soared to the skies,
And everything was deathly still,
So the angels could arise.

I felt part of my soul disappear;
Then it came back to me.
"I cannot leave you now, dear,
I have too much love for thee."

Then her spirit crept silently back
And walked right down in my heart.
Then we retraced the midnight track,
Resolving that we should never part.

She is part of the ghost within
My breast, and rested there in peace;
Until cannons roared in battle din
And list of wounded did increase.

Fearless Americans who took the chance,
Storming machine guns' deathly nest;
Her spirit is now with her son in France
And urges him forward to do his best.

I am sure she whispered in his ear
To defy the fates of war,
When bullets whistled by so near,
And never left a scar.

Then she hovered over soldiers dead
And coaxed the flowers into bloom
From foot of grave to the head,
To bloom forever as a fragrant tomb.

To mark the spot where lies
Bodies of our heroes brave
That peace on earth and in the skies
And mothers' sons in future save.

Then her spirit returned and said
Parents have done their part
For their soldier sons lying dead
And they're crying in their heart.

The world will never fully know
The mother's spirit in phantom leaps
To poppy fields of France will go,
Where her soldier son lies asleep.

To bless the ground, green the sod,
Kneel down with gates of heaven ajar
And pray to God, "Oh, merciful God,
I pray Thee prevent another war!"

SWEETHEART MEL O' MINE

Mel o' mine—this sweet Mel o' mine—
So dear to me I can hardly define
Those eyes, color of heaven's blue,
Bright and clear as they are true.
Sparkling in ecstacy's highest noon,
Resemble wild violets in bluest swoon—
Kissed by tears o' night; quenching thirst
Dried by sun's rays, in splendor burst.

Mel o' mine—this sweet Mel o' mine—
More blushing than the wild muscadine.
Reached its height and got its glow
In a clime where soft zephyrs blow.
Weave the fiber of sacred words to be,
I rhyme, my dear, what I think of thee;
Forbid the future should dare to frown,
May the angels of good nature hover 'round.

Mel o' mine—this sweet Mel o' mine—
Sweeter yet than the jassamine;
Because whirlwinds of sweetness went
Across her features with good intent.
Blushes bursting failed to hide from view
Those eyes beamingly rich, soft and blue;
The windows of the soul, pure Sapphirine
Be kind, taunting time, to this Mel o' mine.

Mel o' mine—this sweet Mel o' mine—
I quaff of love's delicious wine.
Were I an artist with magic brush,
It really wouldn't amount to much.
Confronted by the living presence
Of my life's soul and essence;
This fair bud of life richly divine
Like she really is, this Mel o' mine!

WHERE ARE MY CHUMS?

Among the throng I move along,
In a busy life's clamor;
Should I heed the call for greed
And wield the noisy hammer,
Above the confusion of commercial delusion,
Of human grasp for more?
I stand aside and attempt to hide,
Because I'm so very poor.

In bewildered dream, a sudden gleam,
And song low and mild
Of baying hounds upon the grounds,
Where I romped when a child;
The cracking twigs in musical jigs,
In tune with their bark
I still can hear ring out so clear
In tune with the lark.

Where nothing dreads, silence as it treads
Woods in sweet nature's way,
Robes in truth of spotless youth,
Flutters by night and day;
I hear the sobs in silent throbs
Of those past beyond;
Whispers mild and low in zephyrs blow
Of them I was so fond.

And yet it seems these golden streams
Are still peeping through the leaves
In broken folds, color of marigold,
At the foot of the trees;
Where are my chums that used to come?
In jolly council were we
In the golden urn. Could I spurn
A spoon for each of thee?

OH, LORD PRAY TELL

Oh, Lord, pray tell
Is your breath of presence in
The cooling kisses of the wind?
And your hand the zephyrs touch
Clasping us with fragrant clutch,
When beautiful flowers smile and burst
Open their fragrant heads for thirst?
And do they drink when heaven weeps
Your tears of joy in their sleep?

Is your blood the crimson tinge
Of the roses pleading swinge?
When its beautiful scarlet blush
Innocently devours us without a tush,
Wraps us within its fragrant arms?
Are your cheeks its velvet charms?
Is your kiss in its bursting leaves
Bathing our sins to retrieve?

Are the clouds your angry frown
Weep when the rain comes down?
Your spirit of love in every drop
Striking the earth with velvet stop?
Kiss our cheeks on its downward trend
So tinctured with heavenly blend,
Caressing our faces by moistened splash
Cushioned fall on downward dash.

Is your picture in the rippling brook
Winding its way from crook to crook,
Singing a merry song of seeking level
Over shallow shoals of tuneful revel.
And dashing the spray over the falls
Alighting with screams of sudden squalls,
Resuming its song to ocean bound
Rushing onward with moistened sound?

Do you abide in the human breast
And slumber there when at rest?
Are you the engineer of ponderous breath?
Start it up and shut it down at death.
Then start it again with spirit power
Like you do each beautiful flower?
That blooms and dies to live another time
Comes forth more beautiful in its prime.

Is your feeling in the whispered peal
Assures us there must be something real
When it sinks deep into our breast
And spirits walk on the scarlet crest,
Then dive into the blooded stream
And carry us away as in a dream,
Then all the whispers search the heart
And of aftermemories form your part?

When the sinking shudder we feel
Creeps into the heart, does it steal
Our life and depart with silken tread
So noisily it don't wake the dead,
That it left without a soul
For the bell to notify by its toll
That a soul has flown, body back to dust,
Is the soul kept in sacred trust?

THE GIRL THAT WORE THE GINGHAM DRESS

Oh that I could see again the girl
In the little gingham dress!
Bask in her smiles, and feel her
Soul's burning caress.
That left the thrills of troops
Marching upon my lips;
And feel the beating of her heart
In her finger tips,
When she gave me that reassuring
And gentle little squeeze
As a message from her heart,
Honest as the trees.

The golden wreaths of memory
Envelope me in a mist
And draw me tenderly toward the
Lips I have kissed.
In my vision I am bewitched by a
Pair of melting eyes
Revealing from their depths
Love's sweetest Paradise.
Where the tunes of love were played
In sweet silent chords
And the angels of her soul were the
Ladies of her lords.

Could I feast upon the glances she
Cast so sweet and shy,
And feel again my heart leap to the
Heavens of her sky.
Hear her voice again in honeyed tone
Of solid gold,
Soothe the brow that I know must
Now be growing old.
Brush back the silver hair as in
The days now of yore—
When she had on gingham dress and
Both of us were so poor.

Sweet memory, I drink deep of the
Brew most divine
Of a dear girl that I once thought
By rights was mine.
But fate and misfortune handed us
Bitter dregs to drain.
The drift of fleeing time stoppeth
Not for sad refrain;
But I am drunk on thoughts tonight—
Wish I not for more—
Only for the girl in the gingham
When both were so poor.

LIFE'S BACKWARD TRAIL

Could I wander back
And retrace the track
Over life's winding road
Of fates that deceive
And gradually relieve
The heavy laden load,—
Accumulated by years
Of sighs and tears,
An endless toiling grind,—
Observe the pitfalls
And barriered walls
When I was blind!

Erase the tangled kinks
Of youthful thinks
Of life's unseen blunders,
Could I but behold
All the squandered gold
Again see childish wonders,
Feel the passions sweep
Down the crimson street,
Feel the confiding palm
Look deep in soulful orbs
As your life they absorb
In sweet enchanted calm!

In my wandering dream
Along the golden stream
Journeyed thoughts impress
Upon my head the crown
So gently handed down,
A queen in gingham dress,
When we ate artichokes
Under the giant oaks,
Love's cupids whispered words
Of the sweetest song
That has fluttered along,
As singing of the birds,

Oh, yes, I wander on
With those that are gone;
Hear rejoicing on the side;
From the cooling spring
I accept an offering,
Drink deep of youthful tide,
Flowing from creviced bank
Where in youth I drank
Of this dear bubbling vein,
Bursting forth as though
The Lord had told it so,
Draughts make me young again.

Along the winding paths
Of the aftermaths
Retrace a youthful trail,
The old familiar ruts
The wagon wheels had cut,
Marks of the passing snail;
In the road's powdered dust,
Laid the dying locust,
His song weak and faint;
Dogwood blossoms fountain
Of fragrant breathing mountain
For nostrils of a saint.

I noticed the stumps
Of life's uneven bumps
And felt the injured limbs,
And in my blinding rage
Which bowed me with age,
Now taunted by youthful whims
As I near the end,
My youth seems to extend
Enveloped in supple youth.
How the kneaded muscles
And young corpuscles
Assert the simple truth.

Once more I feel the hand
So gentle and so grand
Of mother's magnetic stroke,
Against the throbbing breast
Of love's cherished hidden nest,
When a baby she sweetly awoke
By a kiss that sank so deep
That I taste it as I weep
Of a honeyed soul far away.
Could I get the kiss I crave
And shed my tears on her grave
Kneel and pray and pray and pray

SWEET FORTY-FIVE

Amid the spirit of Christmas cheer,
Of everything that's sweet and dear,
In the sweep of Yuletide and mirth
I rhyme of the sweetest wife on earth;
Just like she was when sweet sixteen,
Love just as fresh and just as green;
Admitting that she is sweet forty-five—
Just as dear to me and as much alive;
Blushing spires on cheeks were raised
And with crimson life were all ablaze
Driven by an army of tinted insurrection
That scattered blushes in every direction
None perished; they're all yet alive,
Although now she is sweet forty-five.

Good nature in brilliant splendor beams
In her whole soul and life it seems;
Those sweet cheeks are all aglow;
You can see the blushes come and go
Across the dimples in romp and play,
Another one coming as one fades away;
Her life now in its towering height,
The passive sweetness in its might.
Bless her living for those who love her,
Dearest wife and the sweetest mother;
Absorbed cheer of the sun-kissed hills
Of Missouri and its dearest thrills;
My golden thoughts feast and thrive
Now that she is sweet forty-five.

Could I weave nature in simple grace,
Paint the tint that's in her face,
Use it as a golden priceless chart,
Stand it up just inside of my heart,—
Where gods of love dance in glee,—
For my wife they could hold a jubilee;
She could gather them up in loving arms,
Dry their tears of joy, soothe the charms,
Throw them back in life's crimson stream,
Sleep upon her cheeks as in a dream,
Wake up the color of the reddest rose
After lying so long in sweet repose;
Storing honey like bees in the hive
For my dear wife now sweet forty-five.

PHANTOM THOUGHTS

I love to think
Upon the brink
Of memory's flowing stream,
Shed briny tears
For other dears,
Bask in a brilliant dream
Of days forlorn
That now adorn
Worn pages of thought;
Turn the leaves
That always weave
Fabrics that were caught.

I deign to scorn
Which nature born,
Bud of Life that blooms
From studded gleams
Of silver beams
Which penetrate the glooms;
The stork hovered around
And laid it down
From crimson flowing tide;
Love in breast so mild
For nature's child,
Deeper than oceans wide.

Thoughts of paradise
Waiting in the skies
For the phantom ghost of mist;
Fragrance of the hyacinth
From its labyrinth
In the zephyred wind that kissed
A soul rich and deep
When in peaceful sleep.
That fragrance sank within
The crimson-crested bed
Of fountain flowing red
Upon its cushion-pillowed kin.

Nature brews the wine
From the loaded vine,
With clustered bunch of grapes
Grain of billowy fields
Golden grainary yields;
In brain those pictured landscapes,
Nectared of the gods,
Rich with winks and nods,
Smothers the skeletons of the feast,
Extracts bitter from sweet
For those you greet,
Thus its richness is increased.

In earth's secret breast
The mystery rests.
Of diamonds gleams and glitters
The blue mazed dome;
Is the home
Of feathered soul that twitters,
Footprints of fate,
Never early, never late;
Announce no sound of joy or sorrow,
Never does extend
Or even pretend
What may be done tomorrow.

Gems of the past
Will forfever last,
The shadow of forms and laughs
Of our childhood days
In our romps and plays,
Blowing now in times wasting chaff,
And pictures taken then
Now in brain and pen,—
They appear in a mist of revelry.
Hear the happy shout
Of those all about,
Of their ghost we hear and see.

CROOKED CREEK

Crooked creek—what the name implied—
Couldn't been crookeder had it tried—
From source of its fountain head
Drained the rich land's watershed;
It was raging when freshets fell,
To ford it you might as well
Go back and unhitch your team
An' wait on this contrary stream,
Before you could get to town
Had to run itself out an' down.

I look back as time devours
Upon the many pleasant hours
In summer months of May and June,
An' crabapple blossoms' perfume
In the breezes which were sent
By the Lord with sweet intent;
Couldn't forget it if I tried
Until the day I have expired,
An' I'll bet my old white hat
It had more big an' yallar cat

Than any stream that ever run
Beneath the summer's b'ilin' sun.
This creek bended aroun' in a way
Split the meadows of fragrant hay,
Wound around and wended through
Where corn shook its blades at you;
At places lowered its grassy shore
To slip beneath the sycamore,
Then came out so bright an' clear,
Sang a song like a bird of cheer.

Onward it went like a bended arm
Thru valleys an' Boss Grave's farm;
Narrowed down to a slender form
When passing the home of Uncle Norm;
Knew exactly what it was about,
Lowered its banks and flattened out,
Underneath the trees—dripping moss—
So the wagons could easily cross
The ripples on its crystal breast
To where souls were laid to rest.

Then it deepened and widened out
Hurried along with rippled shout,
Whirled and made crystal wreaths
Over pebbles lying just beneath;
'Tis here that I am happy to state
Cats were big an' grinnels had weight
An' the floppin'est sun-of-a-gun fish
That any person could ever wish,
Full of fight, full of vim and sass—
Told me afterward it was a bass.

The slipping time is passing fast
Yet I shall remember to the last
Where I cut the hickory poles
An' remember the dear old fishing holes;
Grassy banks where stock did graze
An' I spent the summer's happy days,
When soul of May was seeping thru
Where wild violets and daisies grew—
Those were days when youth was sweet
An' livin' and fishin' was hard to beat.

THE OLE GARRET ROOM

Ole garret room I've thought of you since I left home
An' I've done nothing but over this wide world roam;
I've had my ups an' downs, I've felt pangs of hunger, too;
I really didn't know that I was so fond of you.

Ole garret room, 'neath the roof's weather-beaten boards—
Was a haven for me even tho' the j'ist was hangin' full o' gourds;
Mornin' sun stole thru the cracks an' fell on the counterpane
An' tebaker was hangin' on the sticks like a horse's mane.

The tick o' the Seth Thomas clock in the sittin'-room below—
Then the shadows o' the fire looked like ghosts all aglow
So spooky-like; an' would walk aroun' like they were dead;
I woud say my prayers in a whisper an' cover up my head.

When I went to bed when the rain was comin' down
An' the pitter-patter of it had such a soothin' sound—
That it lulled me into a slumber as deep as stars were high
An' it prevented me from hearing the clock's cuckoo cry.

I've slept in fine beds, an' I've slept on the turf,
But no feathers sloshed against me like the ocean's surf
As they did in that bed in the ole garret room of mine
Where the brilliance of the morn was richer than wine.

When my time on earth nears the end I'll steal back unawares
With all my burdens and with all of my cares,
Lie down in that little bed, and call the angels near
In that ole garret room go to sleep, an' let my soul disappear .

BORN IN POSEY

I'm not sorry I wus born in Posey
Whar punkins war yallar an' apples rosy,
Worter mell'ns striped an' meat wus red
An' korn tasted gud when hogs war fed;
Keows war slick, butter kolor o' gold—
Made a feller feel gingerly an' bold;
Hazelnuts war in klusters on the bush
An' the korn kim up with lots o' push;
Clover had blossoms big as a rose,
Trees had hickory nuts longer'n yur nose;
Persimm'ns war puck'ry till frost did kum—
Jes' kolor o' punkins an' big as plums.

I'm not sorry I wus born in Posey—
Feather beds waitin' if you wus dosey,
Klap-boards plentiful, hoop poles tall,
An' we used hick'ry buts for a maul.
Had we sum o' the walnut logs we used to burn
An' sum o' the butter we had to churn,
We'd have enuf money to take a trip
Bak to Posey, wouldn't care a flip
If we ever got bak to our present state:
Write hum an' tell 'em we'd be late,
Spendin' our time out in the sands
Sparkin' the gals an' helpin' the hands.

I'm not sorry I wus born in Posey—
Girls war stunnin' an' cheeks war rosy;
My memory takes me bak along the streams
In my youthful days and it only seems
But yesterday I herd the koon dogs bark
An' the cheerful song of the early lark;
Hazelnut groves an' the pawpaw thickets.
The katydid's song along with the crickets',—
The hoot owls hoo an' screech-owls scream—
Darn my buttin,' ain't it a happy dream
To be bak in Posey with the girl you luve
Hangin' on yur arm sweeter'n a dove?

I'm not sorry I wus born in Posey—
People war gud an' homes war cozy;
Pop korn poppin' and kandy wus ready,
Korn ears war big and wheat wus heady,
Turnips wus whoppers and taters had eyes
Blind as a bat an' enormus in size;
Punkin kustard, boiled bak bone, apple cider—
Holy smoke, my appetite's gettin' wider and wider,—
My mouth is woterin' an' I feel a knawin'
Like sumthing drawin' an' a-drawin'
Me swiftly bak to that dear old Posey
An' hangin' on my arm a big argosy.

VISION QUEEN

Oh, desire; that I could command
The magic touch of an artist hand;
Greater yet than was ever born
To paint the features that adorn,
A beautiful girl, sweet and mild,
And tint the beauties growing wild
Upon her cheeks, and never miss
Or fail to show the crouching kiss,
Ready to spring with passion leap
From within its bed of crimson sleep.
Masterpiece of beauty it would seem
To paint a picture of vision queen.

Oh, desire, that I could command
Or control nature that is so grand,
And stamp upon the features a rose
Where the cupids sleep and doze!
And hide upon the drooping lid
That curtains the soul that's hid
Behind those sweet pleading eyes
Where rushing troop of passion lies;
Slumbering on their arms at rest,
Tucked away in their sacred nest,
To stay forever in their Empyrean
I dream, oh I dream of vision queen.

Oh, desire to touch the delicate hand
Of my vision queen great and grand,
And tint the lips color of the rose
Where tide of kisses ebbs and flows,
To sweeten the world in the air
Of this vision queen sweet and fair,
Whose eyes have that melting glance
From which cupids sing and dance.
Oh, wildest dream of a passion soul—
The gods of love will call the roll,
Raise the blinds that hide the screen
That I may view this vision queen.

Oh, desire, that I could command
Countless millions with sweetest band
Of musicians who play mellow strains
That the greatest masters could attain,
To mingle with the rumble of the wheels
Made of human existence, and how it feels,
For a chariot race across the sunny turf
Through kisses of billows' raging surf,
With vision queen urging passion steeds—
For a kissing whip would be all she needs,
A dream of loveliness just sweet sixteen—
I dream, I dream, of vision queen.

LOVE'S BURNING KISS

The first time our lips met
Her sparkling eyes revealed
A scene I could not forget,
Of what had lain concealed.

I saw the cupids in her heart
Float right out of her eyes
Each armed with spear and dart,
And a golden urn full of sighs.

I felt their sweet little feet
Pitter-patter down into my soul,
Creep to my heart's cherished retreat
And lie down in that scarlet bowl.

IN THE HARVEST DAYS

When the beans were in the pod an' taters in the hill
An' the jay-bird in the deadin' was whettin' up his bill—
To eat enough of our cherries to cut us down on pie—
An' the lambs were bleatin' an' the springers old enough to fry,
When the golden grain was ripe and harvest time was near—
Back on the ole farm, where everything was dear.

When the sun was bilin' down and the days good an' warm,
An' the roses bloomin' in the yard an' the bees about to swarm,
Enny minute, jest waitin' an' a-watchin' no one could tell—
An' you could hardly keep still like the clapper in the bell—
When the golden grain was ripe an' harvest time was near
Back on the ole farm, where everything was dear.

When June apples were blushin' yaller an' dew-berries put in a bid
From beneath the vines where may of them were hid,
An' cherries hangin' on the tree were bustin' open red,
And the lettuce growin' in the bed was bigger'n yur head,—
When the golden grain was ripe and harvest time was near
Back on the ole farm, where everything was dear.

An' mother she was busy, and sister she was too—
In fact there was something for all of us to do,
For the harvest dinner had to be fixed fit for a king
An' jes stacked up high with every growin' thing;
When the golden grain was ripe and harvest time was near
Back on the ole farm, where everything was dear.

DEAR JIM RILEY

Upon the shelves of my brain and in the library of my soul
Are stored away the sweetest bunch of stories ever told;
Tonight they are just walking round—some talking, some at play—
And each one about the other one has something good to say.
The father of these characters dear, Jim Riley so good and droll
Who had the honeyed sweetness flowing out of his noble soul.

Pouring out these delicious draughts so sparkling and so clear,
That enriched the heart of many a poor soul when he was here;
The ever ready goblet of cheer he handed out full to the brim,
Which was so refreshing they always desired another glass from him.
There must have been a fountain of goodness in his cheerful breast
That just ran over with thoughts of paradise for Orphant Annie and the rest.

When life's spirits are dull and you don't feel "just exactly so"—
You are tired and weary and you feel the blues come and go—
Sweet memory comes along and unlocks the heart's treasure chest
And out walks all those characters, all dressed up in their best,
Put their arms around you and down the paths of sweetness you stroll;
After which they all go to sleep again in the library of your soul.

Dear Jim Riley who wrote the words that will never die,
They nestle around our hearts and cheer us when we sigh;
The frost on the punkin lubricates our aching hearts,
"The evening of our days" form life's most sacred part;
These thoughts all kneel down with us and pray when bells for Riley toll
And hold their sacrament with us in the library of our soul.

HAPPY DAYS BEHIND THE PLOW

When tornadoes of fragrance blowing found their way
From the golden waving meadow, standing sweet with hay,
And fell around and among the corn's fodder-blades
And sank in slumber on the slender moving shades,
Life seemed so sweet then, but much dearer to me now
When I recall those happy days when I walked behind the plow.

When I breathed the fresh air mellowed by a morning sun,
Drank the glory poured out for each and every living one
From God's heaven where the sky was so blue and so clear
And the gentleness was running in streams everywhere;
And making all due consideration I possibly could allow
My happy days were spent when I walked behind the plow.

The dear old farm where the children romped in glee,
Slid down the straw-stack,—those were the days for me!
Don't leave the farm, boys, you'll be sorry if you ever do,
An' you'll hanker after it, for it is honest and so true,
You'll take your hat off and make a little humble bow
To the days you spent when you walked behind the plow.

TO MY CHUMS OF THE SPREADS

The Golden threads of dearest spreads
In the Palace of my breast
Tied with silken knots of forget-me-nots
Bloom on Memory's sacred crest,
And in my dreams of winding streams
I do not repress the sigh:
Upon the hook we spat to catch yallar cat,
Two fishing chums, Will and I.

In the curving brooks and shady nooks
Our baited hook was cast
The ripling stream would ever seem,
Golden Eagles of the past,
The Sun's arrowed beams and shivered gleams,
Hit the water with a splash
That bounded idly along with the song,
With splendor's glittering dash.

Those drooping boughs sure to arouse
Memory for the sycamore king
Arms across the bank we had to thank,
Shade o' the dear old thing;
As days dwindled we caught the grinnel,
And the joy that it brought.
Were we surprised to catch goggle eyes?
Such we hadn't sought.

The massive Oaks with foliage cloaks,
Spread their sheltering arms
From the Sun's highest noon in withering swoon,
In the shadow of its charms;
How well we knew where wild violets grew;
Heard the Red Birds' sweetest song;
Such pleasant measures of delightful treasures,
Simply makes us young and strong.

Troops of cherished charms are called to arms,
Come rushing down the scarlet street,
Charged bygone regrets, stacked their bayonets,
Handed out draughts of the sweet,
Of Memory's Soothing wine from the vine
I drink not too deep perchance
From the Golden bowl of cherished soul,
I slumber in a phantom trance.

In good round sums I repay to chosen chums,
The memory of my beating heart;
Drops of cherished blood from the flood
Of Memory's most precious chart,
And I unlock the chest in my breast,
I reveal those precious Gems
That my Chums may view that never knew
Of these jeweled diadems.

Those gilded chains, when severed in twain
And the links are broken in two,
We are deathly pale and lose the trail,
Where we trod, I and you;
We hear chosen hands play on baby Grands,
"Of life there's left only the shreds"—
Clouds of drifting mist as we are kissed
By the Spreads—Oh, Dearest Spreads.

THE CRIMSON QUEEN

My dear Howcanna:
A poem to you I enclose
Telling, as the story goes,
A morning we were inspired
By thoughts sweetly sired
In a forest of giant trees
Leaves quivering in the breeze—
Who were kings of vegetation
In our minds of imagination,
Sentinels of silent gloom
Of stillness like a tomb;
Yes, kings of mighty strength
Reaching full nature's length,
Centuries of storms had weathered
And with thick leaves feathered
which shook with silken rustle;
Yet strength of mighty muscle.
Everything was upon the move;
To reciprocate it did behoove;
Being mystified and enthused
We could not have been excused
To have looked on with scorn
This jewel-spangled morn,
With such bewitching sweetness
Of nature in all its richness,
Enticing us to love and live
Seeing what Nature had to give
When it created such a scene
By lifting the darkened screen,
After heavens had wept
Upon the beauties that slept,
Yet remained golden tinted light;
We did wonder at such a sight.
'Twas mysterious of the hidden age
With nature's actors on the stage,
Bid us drink of sunshine brook
After enjoying such a look.
The tune of sweet nature's refrain
In our astonished delightful brain,
Giant of wonder in complete command
Of gorgeous display so grand,—
We realized this with great relief
And renounced our distress and grief,
For is it not a biblical fact
Disobedience you afterward retract?

As ye sow, ye also will reap;
Conscience hammers while you sleep.
Bathing our hearts with the scene,
Our souls pure as the running stream,
This beautiful rose we discovered
While by nature's grandness covered;
We agreed to be its lifelong chums
While the wheels of nature hummed,
Its velvet leaves we silently kissed
Thinking what other people missed.

THE CRIMSON QUEEN

Balmy summer's morn—
Night was shorn,
Being tired and worn,
Of its task.
The sun was peeping,
Awaking those sleeping,
Insects were creeping
Out to bask.

Such a morning stroll
Thrilled to the soul!
Could anything be droll,
In such a light?
Wondered as we walked
How sweet nature talked,
Never had it balked
In its might.

Standing spellbound
By everything around,
Above and on ground,
So grand;
By nature captured,
Embraced, enraptured,
By beauty raptured,—
God's Hand.

Being not alone
By fragrance blown
To nostrils, our own,
By heaven's wind—
The sweetest perfume
Mortals may consume—
Dispel the gloom
If you've sinned.

Aware of presence stronger
Could we endure longer
Filled by such wonder;
To not look,
Be thus a coward
To be devoured
As fragrance towered
In this nook.

Behold Crimson Queen
Most beautiful seen—
Nothing to screen
The velvet blush
On her lovely face,
Nature of its race
Showing a painted trace
By nature's brush.

To devour our intent
This sweet innocent
Of dress without a rent,—
Crimson hemmed,
Thou young and tender,
Wouldst thou render
Two, who will remember,
A body stemmed?

In blood wast thou steeped,
Dipped down deep,
Then upon you heaped;
So red
Blood of human veins
Breath of mist remains
Of crimson stain,
Nature said.

Crimson blushing dear,
Your life we fear;
Shall we be near
To guard
That no loving thief
Ever disturb a leaf
To cause you grief,
Our regard.

The sun's rays swept
Across tears wept
From soul's depth;
We listened
Murmuring, I'm not doomed,
Being from nature's womb;
Crimson Queen, guard of our tomb
We christened.

Plant beside our vault,
To repel every assault;
The fragrance will halt
The ghoul.
Stand aside, miserable sir!
It shall not occur
To cast upon me a slur;
Steal not, soul.

I am a sentinel of nature,
Conscience to allure
And make men truer;
Who steals
From the sacred grave
To crime is a slave
And spotless honor craves
But never feels.

Faces against velvet folds
Sweet rose's story told;
Beautiful to behold
And forever cherish
Seemed its dear arms,
Wrapped us in its charms
Promising forever no harms—
We felt queerish.

Crimson Queen your name;
From nature came
Both renown and fame;
You await
Blood, life and truth,
Crimson bloom of youth
Never to be uncouth,—
Virtue's trait.

Lay upon our biers
Crimson Queens dears,
Laying tier upon tier;
Forget it not.
Queens of crimson hue
Kissed by sun and dew
As heaven's winds blew,
Forget it not.

WHEN THE HAWS ARE RIPE

When the frost had taken the
Persimmons' pucker out,
Mellowed the black haw's heart
So it made yur taster shout,
An' you sit up in the tree,
Enjoyin' a delicious treat,
Never thinkin' o' the time
But jes' eat, and eat, and eat.

With a rim around yur mouth
The color of the haw,
An' threw the seeds at every jay
Bird you saw;
Jes' a-sittin' up in the tree,
Straddle of a limb,
And you eat until yur bread-basket
Was full to the rim.

They tasted so doggon'd good,
Didn't care to quit;
Jes' kinder adjusted yurself
And loosened up a bit,
Went at agin, until yur waist
Was tighter than a drum;
Jes' a-bettin' to yurself that
Skinney's sorry he didn't cum.

An' you sit right there until
So full you couldn't pant,—
The trees' limbs were gettin' bare
And looked awful gaunt;
Took home a pocketful for Sis and
Little brother Dan,
Then a hatful o' persimmons
For cousin Sall Ann.

When the frost had taken
The persimmons' pucker out
You eat black haws until
You was all stuffed out;
Had I some of those haws todav
Life the frost fixed mellow
Then I would be nothin' but a boy
Agin, and not a city feller.

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THE DRIFT OF TIME

I have seen upon the maiden's cheek the rose blooming there
Lose its leaves one by one, when the wind of time blew it bare,
Wrinkles of age replaced the rose and only pallied features remain;
Raven tresses were turned to silver, but God left the soul the same.

I have heard the oceans roar and the sea gulls' warning cry
When the bell buoys rode the waves that seemed mountains high;
Then I have seen the ocean's breast calm like a placid silver lake
Resting peaceful as a child in its cradle for mother's sake.

I have heard the wind scream, in sorrow and dying distress,
Felt its lonesome silence brought along from the wilderness;
From whence it gathered the somber gloom placed within my ears;
In the wind of time I hear the rumble of fleeting years.

I have seen the diamond cast its sparks of beautiful fire
And the saphire flash its rays of blue mysterious desire;
I have never seen, but know of the beauties in the heart's crimson bowl;
There is nothing I have heard or seen as beautiful as a mother's soul.

No stone, beautiful, rich or rare, could begin to compare
With love within a mother's breast or the sweetness resting there;
A fountain of patience, flowing with fondness all her own
Drift of time will never remove; for by the Lord this love was sown.

THE ROSE THAT WILLED ITS BEAUTIFUL SOUL TO ME

A rose willed its beautiful soul to me
Flaunting its fragrance in the wind so free;
The effulgence of this leaf-colored soul
Bathed my heart and wrote the crimson scroll;
Across velvet leaves in empyrean sweetness
Laid against my cheek with tender neatness
All its rapturous beauty with reddest plumes,
Bursted and drenched me drunk with perfume.

I kissed this fragrant bride, enraptured dear,
Sank into sweet slumberland without a fear,
Viewed streets with golden splendor paved
Drank the nectar of the richness I craved,
Soared to peaks of delight on velvet wings,
Embraced within the arms of the whisperings;
Soothed by little fingers I could not see
Within the rose who willed its fragrant soul to me.

A rose willed its beautiful soul to me
Opened the fountain of love's perfumed sea,
Flooded air with soft zephyrs richly sweet,
Sighed gently through heart's unknown street;
Love caressed a rose and one in bewitching embrace,
Passed into unknown depths of a perfumed palace;
Woven into the rose who willed its soul to me.
Within mountains of fragrance I weave an epopee.

A rose willed its beautiful soul to me
Whispered, "Fragrance live, as I die for thee."
Although years have passed its perfumed breath
Is breathing yet, so sweetly, even in death;
And its love blooms in my heart for mother dear;
Upon the dried leaves I shed a memoried tear,
As my thoughts weep for dear mother and rose, to see
Who plucked the rose who willed its soul to me.

KITCHEN—DEAR OLE KITCHEN

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
My appetite's jes itchin'
To be gratified
An' really satisfied
With some biled bak-bone
An' brown crusted corn-pone—
My appetite to adjust
An' jes eat till I bust,
In the dear ole kitchen.

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
Appetite buckin' an' pitchin'
For the taters almost done
Bustin' open like the sun
With butter yaller as gold
Spread on as of old—
We took the ole pepper can
Seasoned 'em while butter ran,
In the dear ole kitchen.

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
My stummuck is jes twitchin,
An' the tea kettle's throat is chokin'
The fire ma kept pokin' an' pokin'
(Look out, ma, she's goin' to bust!)
I thought it surely must,
Choked up so with steam
That I had to scream
In the dear ole kitchen.

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
With victuals bewitchin',
Coffee steamin' in the pot
From the flavor that you got;
Appetite showed its indicator
When you smelt the nutmeg grater
Sprinklin' those apple-pies!
It soared to the skies
In the dear ole kitchen.

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
My appetite is unhitchin'
To live a while with you,
Partake of the chicken stew,
Apple dumplins from the ole pot
That hit the sacred spot.
Yur stummuck dun the fling
Of bak step an' pigeon wing
In the dear ole kitchen.

Kitchen, dear ole kitchen,
With memory so enrichin'
Mother standin' at the stove
In her hand sage and cloves
Seasonin's sausage and puddin'
The dearest darling!
I hear the bells ting-a-ling—
To be bak I'd give anything
In the dear ole kitchen.

THOSE WHO YEARN

Those who yearn
To see the old home in simple style,
Remain in it from now till after-while,
Roll round upon the old rag carpet,
Sleep again in the old room in the garret;
Then watch the fire dance and leap
From the dog irons to top of heap
Of logs piled high to the big arch,
From October to way deep in March—
Get hold of the tongs and let them snap,
Wake up Pussie from her quiet nap,
Listen to her quiet, satisfied purr
Then go out and pet the old cur.

Those who yearn
To hear father wind the old clock,
Lay the key upon the hood of its frock,
Listen for it to strike—and remember how
We would try and guess, Now—Now,
Before it would cluck kinder like a hen
After laying an egg in a secret den.
Jes toast your feet before the fire
Before you would pray and retire;
Have mother tuck the quilts around the bed;
("Mother's babies," under her breath she said)
Music would be in her retreating steps—
Footsteps of mother in memory's depths.

Those who yearn
To hear again the horses' hungry neigh,
Fill up their manger with bright new hay,
Then give them just eight ears of corn
An' have to shuck it just before morn!
Hurry, give the cows a good warm bran mash,
Pump water for them and listen to it splash
Into the old trough hewn out of a log;
Then run across the lot with the dog,
Get a basket ful lof corn for the pigs
And a bucket full of swill—hear them swig!—
Hear 'em grunt and squeal for their share—
I'd like to be a boy again an' go back there!

Those who yearn
To hear the rooster's dawning crow
An' in it kinder detect the coming snow,—
Because 't had a falling weather sound,
After striking the air fell to the ground—
Then wash and have that refreshing face
All aglow with the health of dear ole place;
Hear the breakfast bell's soothing peal!
Remember how awful hungry it made you feel?
With ball-faced biscuits bustin' open—
Looked so appetizin' an' you was a-hopin'
Mother had enough (were so good and light)
So bread and 'lassus would come out right.

Those who yearn
To roll on the floor and kick up their heels
In the ole home again, see how good it feels,
Gather corn until the crib is full,
Load up the wagon with all they can pull
Of sweet clover hay cured by summer's sun,
Dampened by the dew after day was done;
You could almost smell moonlight beams,
Like it was fixed by the Lord it seems—
No such perfume by druggist ever sold,
No book or pen known has ever told.
After years of city life we learn
Jest what it is to yearn and yearn!

WHEN OUR BOY COMES BACK

Spring seems so beautiful and the trees are leaving out
I see the children in their play and hear the happy shout,
Their faces radiant with blushing health of this fun
Each of them appearing to out-shout the other one,
They are as cheerful as the sun shining from the skies
It makes me think of my boy when about that size.

Yes spring has come and the birds are full of cheer
Notes from their little throats are heard, everywhere,
There is nothing lacking in beauty all around, that I can see
But I could enjoy it better if my boy was back with me,
And in my daily life I could play quite a different part
And the smile of mother would come from her heart.

Home would be more cheerful and the sun a different gleam
And happiness would be flowing like a golden stream,
The song birds' thrill would have a sweeter tone
We could all enjoy it better if our boy was back home,
Even the ticking of the clock would be music to our ears
The everlasting joy of his coming back would linger for years,

His own dear bed stands as it did when he left
Nothing has been disturbed from the way it was kept,
The only thing left to make the home like it used to be
Is for our boy to come back from far across the sea,
Then the cakes mother makes would surpass the baker's art
And the smiles on her happy face would be from her heart.

The lilacs are in bloom and there's clover in the yard
Come back, my boy, and hear the bark of your dear old pard,
There will be joy in the wind and green in the trees
And roses blooming will come to you in every little breeze,
And home will be heaven the one that has never been beat
The love and smiles from mother heart will be even more sweet.

Dedicated to those brave boys who fought and died that the world might live.—Noble Seward Endicott.

MIZZOURI SWEETHEART OF MINE

The storms of memory dashes its rains
Against my heart and the window panes
Of my soul, where hangs a photograph
With the sweetest face and dearest laugh
Of a girl born on the grape-clad hills
With a heart full of Mizzouri thrills.

Eighteen summers had dawned and fled
Leaving a crown of virtue on her head
Her cheeks with red roses bursting leaves
Voice cheerful as birds singing in the trees
My heart is drenched with thoughts divine
Thinking of this sweetheart of mine.

We met on Mizzouri's sunkissed hill
Where love's cupids with arrows shot to kill
When she threw at me a tuft of grass,
I caught the signal of the sweetest lass
Felt the strands of love she entwined
Knew at once they were the Mizzouri kind.

Deftly were they tied with silken knots
With ribboned bows around sacred spots
Kisses hanging on her lips in clusters
Just invitin' like and regular busters
And were falling off upon her côlbertine
Of this Mizzouri sweetheart of mine.

I saw love's blushes chase each other about
An' cupids nothing but tease and pout
They painted crimson plumes upon her cheeks
Like whispers of the soul when it speaks
Glances from her eyes poured the richest wine
She was a Mizzouri sweetheart of mine.

The storms of memory dashes its rains
In my thoughts of sweet and sad refrain
For after I made this sweet girl my wife
God saw proper to take her from this life
And she is just walking around in my brain
Just as sweet tonight and just as plain,

As when she threw that tuft of grass
And I caught the signal of the sweetest lass,
Embracing her in her phanton trips to my heart
And soul, she forms memory's soothing part
Sleeping in my heart to wake I'm not inclined
To disturb this Mizzouri sweetheart of mine.

THE BITTER WITH THE SWEET

Could I in a muse, idly excuse
A single thought
Of havoc wrought,
Or why was it I did not refuse
When I drained the bitter dregs
Tottering on misfortune's legs,
I shall refrain,
To attempt again,
Although the bittnerness of it then
Was as sweet as tasted by other men.

In stillness of night mind is bright
The sweetest truth
Present in your youth,
Of memories burning mellow light,
You recall the long dismal days
When successes' fires wouldn't blaze,
Coaxing in deep despair
The spark wasn't there,
For you, and left everything dark
Later on lit, with faintest spark.

Could I foretell the bliss in this
Rhyme or theme
In my vision dream,
What lies hidden beyond the kiss
In a cruel world like this
Could you see the love or hate
That is centered in
The loss or win,
In the whirling wheel of twisting fate,
In some things bad and others great.

The most inspiring thought ever brought
Settling in our heart
Forms a precious part,
Where the fountains of love are caught,
Flowing spotless draughts to bleach
Into vessels which are filled for each
Person to drain
When they abstain
To drink the dregs from the bitter bowl
To destroy the sweetness of his soul.

CHILDHOOD PLAYMATES

Unobserved I noticed the other day
A boyhood chum with whom I used to play,
Around the city's bare and vacant lots
When both of us were but little tots,
I saw time had stamped upon his brow
Since we used to work and hold the plow,
A crow's foot here and a wrinkle there,
His once happy face had lines of care.

The storms of toil and daily task
Had changed his smile to wrinkled mass
But in his eye and feebled step
There yet remained some youthful pep,
But his heart was ever kind and true,
Most delighted he was to do for you,
And smile while his right would extend
Never got through helping out a friend.

Oh friend of mine, could I but wield
A magic wand over the valleys and field,
Tint upon your face former youthful glow
Then romp again with the pal I used to know,
Let us sneak away unbeknown, wander where
The woods were wild and skies were fair,
And crystal stream flowed over silver sand
And swimming holes were cool and grand.

If by magic I could flash friendship's rays
Bring back delights of those precious days,
And wade through the rosey-cheeked clover
When each of us was just a little lover,
Of a sweet-faced girl walking by our side
When joys were sweet and the world was wide,
Their braided hair was always in a muss
Every kiss they gave made fools of us.

Never mind old friend, let us wander on,
I will think of you until we are gone,
I'll meet you among the ripples of the sky
Where streets are golden and joys never die,
A fairyland of fountains of eternal bliss
And the fair-faced maidens we used to kiss
Will be in angel form and unseen breath
Laughing at time, as we hated death.